

# The Classical Bulletin

Published monthly from November through April by the Department of Classical Languages at Saint Louis University, Saint Louis 8, Missouri.  
Subscription price: \$2.00 a year. Entered as second-class matter at the Saint Louis, Missouri, Post-Office under the Act of March 3, 1879.

VOLUME 35

MARCH 1959

NUMBER 5

## Rhetorical Connotations of *Venenum*

Among Latin writers, Apuleius is almost without peer as a story-teller. His only serious rivals are Virgil and Petronius, and it is probably no accident that all three were versed in rhetoric, which they turned to good account in dramatizing their narratives. Apuleius' major work, the *Metamorphoses*, is full of picturesque tales, which, however fantastic and melodramatic, nevertheless grip the reader's interest by their rapidity of movement. One of the best, a story of crime and punishment, recounts the revenge of Charite, who had shared the hardships of capture by robbers along with Lucius, the hero of the *Metamorphoses*. Her subsequent history, which, like *Hamlet*, ends in the violent death of all the principals, is told by a slave belonging to her household.<sup>1</sup>

### The Charite Story

In a city near to that in which Charite dwelt, lived a youth named Thrasyllus, distinguished by lineage and wealth, but given to self-indulgence and ruined by his gluttony and lusts, who had in evil haunts made himself the companion of robbers and even incurred the guilt of murder. Becoming the suitor of Charite as soon as she reached marriageable years, he had been rejected as a husband because of his questionable reputation, despite his ardent wooing and lavish gifts to her parents. Smarting from this rebuff, he thirsted for the opportunity to retaliate but concealed his true feelings. After Charite had been delivered from the robbers by the cleverness and courage of her fiancé Tlepolemus, none displayed greater delight at her rescue or bestowed more fulsome praise on her future husband than Thrasyllus. So thoroughly did he ingratiate himself with the pair that he became their almost inseparable companion. Though masquerading as loyal friend after their marriage, he strove, albeit vainly, to engage Charite in secret conversations and persuade her to adultery, but was frustrated by her purity, her true affection for her husband, and the watchful vigilance of her attendants.

Finally the long-awaited occasion for compassing his desires presented itself. Tlepolemus had taken Thrasyllus with him on a deer hunt. As the dogs ringed the covert, and brought their quarry to bay, a fierce wild boar, rather than a deer, emerged from the thicket. The huntsmen's slaves unashamedly retreated, but Thrasyllus urged his companion not to

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abandon such a prize and proposed that they mount their horses and pursue the beast. As they closed in, Tlepolemus flung his javelin, but missed, the shaft passing above the boar's back. Thereupon the treacherous Thrasyllus, instead of trying to dispatch the creature, used his lance to hamstring Tlepolemus' horse, which fell and threw its rider. The boar, rushing upon the prostrate Tlepolemus, gored him mercilessly while Thrasyllus looked on without pity, making no effort to rescue his companion and heedless of his appeals for help. Finally, as his rival was on the point of expiring, Thrasyllus delivered a death-blow to both boar and man, driving his lance through the latter's thigh near the groin, confident that the mark would never be distinguishable from the lacerations produced by the animal's tusk. When the slaves emerged from their hiding-place, the murderer joined in the lamentations over the dead Tlepolemus.

Charite, to whose ears came the first tidings of the disaster, was driven almost insane with grief, and after the funeral resolved to starve herself to death, in spite of the hypocritical consolations of Thrasyllus. But, partly by his own efforts, partly by the intervention of her slaves, kinsmen, and parents, he dissuaded her from this plan. Though she

had fashioned likenesses of her husband to which she accorded worship equal to a god's, Thrasyllus did not forbear in the midst of her unassuaged grief to force his attentions upon her and to propose that she become his bride. Recoiling in horror from the thought, the girl sought time to consider the demand.

That very night, the ghost of Tlepolemus, preternaturally pale and bloodstained, appeared to her in sleep and disclosed the whole monstrous crime of their false friend. Her sole aim revenge, she veiled her purpose, and when Thrasyllus next day assailed her with renewed entreaties, she urged a year's delay, lest the shade of her husband be justly roused to anger and visit destruction upon his successor. Undeterred, he persisted; Charite, feigning acquiescence, now pleaded only that the outward proprieties be observed, and that their liaison be concealed from members of her household until the year of mourning had elapsed. She granted him an assignation for the night of that same day, bidding him come alone, swathed in a concealing cloak, during the first watch. Arrived at her door, he should whistle once, whereupon he would be admitted by her nurse and conducted in total darkness to her chamber.

Suspecting nothing, but only cursing the slow passage of the hours until their meeting, Thrasyllus waited impatiently for the appointed time. All went as Charite had promised; he was given entry by the old nurse and escorted to her quarters. Here, however, his lustful desires met a check, for the servitor, following her mistress's orders, announced that Charite was detained at the bedside of her sick father; meanwhile Thrasyllus was plied with wine into which a sleeping potion had been poured, until he fell into a drugged slumber. Charite, notified by the nurse that all was in readiness, then entered and after a long address to her unconscious victim, in which she proclaimed the nature and purpose of her vengeance (that she would not dispatch him with a sword so that his death should resemble that of Tlepolemus, that she was wreaking the punishment while he was in a stupor lest he should ever know to whom to ascribe the penalty, and that she was visiting doom upon the eyes which she had had the misfortune to please), she pierced his eyes with a hairpin, leaving him totally blinded.

Thereupon, seizing a sword which Tlepolemus was wont to wear, she rushed out of the house through the streets to his tomb, and driving back with the blade the crowd which attempted to save her from self-immolation, she bade them forbear their tears and grief. Having proclaimed the execution of her revenge upon his slayer, detailed the crimes of Thrasyllus, and announced that she now sought by the sword her way to Tlepolemus, she fell upon the steel and died. Her corpse, duly prepared by faithful attendants for burial, was then reunited forever with his.

The final episode of the bloody drama was accomplished when Thrasyllus, learning all that had occurred, likewise resolved upon death and, deeming the sword an unsuitable instrument, repaired to the tomb also, where, barring the doors, he ended his life by starvation.

### Use of the Term "Venenum"

One detail in this story might well occasion some perplexity to the reader not accustomed to the idiom of rhetoric. This is the use of *venenum* in the passage where the nurse consoles Thrasyllus' wait by serving him draughts of drugged wine:

... Tunc anus de iussu dominae blandiens ei furtim depromptis calicibus et oenoforo, quod immixtum vino soporiferum gerebat venenum, crebris potionibus avidae ac secure haurientem mentita dominae tarditatem quasi parentem adideret aegrotum, facile sepelivit in somnum.<sup>2</sup>

To be sure, the descriptive *soporiferum* suggests that the *venenum* was not in itself lethal, but one's first impression might easily be that Charite had delegated her revenge and was employing the traditional woman's weapon.

*Harper's Latin Dictionary* gives the following definitions of *venenum*:

I. originally, like *pharmakon*, anything, especially any liquid substance, that powerfully affects or changes the condition of the body, a *potion, juice, drug* (cf. Dig. 50, 16, 236, and 48, 8, 3).

#### II. in particular

##### A. in a bad sense

1. a *potion that destroys life, poison, venom.*
- b. trop. (i.e. metaphorically) *mischief, evil, destruction.*
2. a *magical potion, charm.*
- b. trop. *charm, seduction.*

##### B. in a good sense

1. a *coloring material, a color, dye, paint.*
2. a *drug used in embalming.*

### Digesta and Lex Cornelia Passages

The relevant content of the first *Digesta* passage cited under I above runs as follows:

Qui *venenum* dicit, adicere debet, utrum malum an bonum: nam et medicamenta venena sunt, quia eo nomine omne continetur, quod adhibitum naturam eius, cui adhibitum esset, mutat.

This distinction between good and bad *venena*, it continues, has its counterpart in the Greek employment of *pháμακον*, which is exemplified in *Odyssey* 4.230.

The other excerpt from the *Digesta* shows that the legal concept of *venenum*, even as early as the *lex Cornelia* of Sulla's time, embraced not only harmful and harmless drugs, but in more specific application love potions and medicaments given to promote conception:<sup>3</sup>

Eiusdem legis Corneliae de sicariis et veneficiis capite quinto, qui *venenum* necandi hominis causa fecerit vel venderit vel habuerit, plectitur. Eiusdem legis poena adficitur, qui in publicum mala medicamenta vendiderit vel hominis necandi causa habuerit. Adiectio autem ista *veneni mali* ostendit esse quaedam et non mala venena, ergo nomen medium est et tam id, quod ad sanandum, quam id, quod ad occidendum paratum est, continet, sed et id quod amatorum appellatur: sed hoc solum notatur in ea lege, quod hominis necandi causa habet, sed ex senatus consulto relegari iussa

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est ea, quae non quidem malo animo, sed malo exemplo medicamentum ad conceptionem dedit, ex quo ea quae acceperat decesserit.

### Testimony from Quintilian

Passing from legal to rhetorical contexts, we discover that Quintilian, in discussing definition, the second main division of his *status* doctrine, poses the question as to whether a love philtre may properly be defined as *venenum*:

Interim quaeritur in rebus specie diversis, an et hoc eodem modo sit appellandum, cum res utraque habet suum nomen, ut amatorium, venenum.<sup>4</sup>

Somewhat earlier, he raises the same issue concerning the spells of magicians; I quote *in extenso*, since it is difficult to lift the pertinent single example from the passage without obscurity:

Diversum est genus, cum controversia consistit in nomine, quod pendet ex scripto, nec versatur in iudiciis nisi propter verba, quae litem faciunt: *An, qui se interfecit, homicida sit? An, qui tyrannum in mortem compulit, tyrannicida? An carmina magorum veneficia?* Res enim manifesta est, sciturque, non idem esse occidere se quod alium, non idem occidere tyrannum quod compellere ad mortem, non idem carmina ac mortiferam potionem; quaeritur tamen, an eodem nomine appellanda sint.<sup>5</sup>

Considerably more elaborate is the development of the question whether a love philtre may be looked upon as *venenum*, when Quintilian takes up the topic of *collectio* or *sylogismus* (analogy), which becomes the resort of a pleader who considers his case too weak to make definition plausible. Despite Quintilian's declared predilection for realistic declamatory themes, it would be hard to find a more fantastic perversion than this case of a woman accused of poisoning because she had given her frigid husband a love potion, divorced him, and refused pleas for reconciliation, so that in despair he had hanged himself:

Nam saepe, si finitio infirma est, in syllogismum delabitur. Sit enim lex: Venefica capite puniatur. Saepe secubanti amatorium dedit; eundem repudiavit; per propinquos rogata, ut rediret, non est reversa; suspendit se maritus. Mulier veneficii rea est. Fortissima est actio dicentis amatorium venenum esse. Id erit finitio; quae si parum valebit, fiet syllogismus, ad quem, velut remissa priore contentione, veniemus: An proinde puniri debeat, ac si virum veneno necasset? Ergo hic status ducit ex eo, quod scriptum est, id, quod incertum est; quod quoniam ratione colligitur, rationativus dicitur.<sup>6</sup>

### Two Selections from Declamationes Minores

In the actual declamatory collections, there are numerous cases concerned with poisoning, but most of them are straightforwardly literal, and, oddly enough, all four from Seneca's *Controversiae* are of this type. Two of Pseudo-Quintilian's *Declamationes Minores*, however, have real relevance to the Apuleian usage of the term.

Case 350 charges poisoning against a second wife who had given a drink of cold water to her gravely ill stepson in spite of warnings by doctors that this would be fatal:

Qui habebat filium, amissa matre eius aliam uxorem duxit. Incidit in gravem valetudinem filius. Convocati sunt medici; dixerunt moriturum, si aquam frigidam bibisset. Dedit illi noverca aquam frigidam: perit iuvenis. Accusatur a marito veneficii.

(Concluded on page 53)

### Sundry Inscriptions for CIGLA<sup>1</sup>

Colleagues from time to time have called my attention to Latin inscriptions that deserve inclusion in CIGLA. Professor Claude Barlow of Clark University discovered the one printed below in the rare *Genealogies of the Stranahan, Josselyn, Fitch, and Dow Families in North America*, by H. R. Stiles, ([Brooklyn 1868] 55). The inscription, like many others an example of pleasingly straightforward Latinity, marked the grave of James Fitch in the Old Burying Ground at Lebanon, Connecticut.

IN HOC SEPULCRO DEPOSITAE SUNT RELIQUIAE / VIRI VERE REVERENDI D: IACOBI FITCH: NATUS / FUIT APUD BOCKING IN COMITATU ESSEXIAE IN ANGLIA, / ANNO DOMINI 1622 DECEMBER 24—QUI POSTQUAM / LINGUIS LITERATIS OPTIME INSTRUCTUS FUISSET / IN NOVANGLIAM VENIT AETAT. 16 ET DEINDE VITAM / DEGIT HARTFORDIAE PER SEPTENNIIUM SUB INSTITU- / -TIONE VIRORUM CELEBERIMORUM D: HOOKER ET D: STONE. / POSTEA MUNERE PASTORALI FUNCTUS EST APUD SAY- / -BROOK PER ANNOS 14. ILLINC CUM ECCLESIAE MAIORI / PARTE NORVICUM MIGRAVIT ET IBI CETEROS VITAE / ANNOS TRANSEGIT IN OPERE EVANGELICO. IN SEN- / -ECTUTE VERO PRAE CORPORIS INFIRMITATE NECES- / -SARIO CESSABAT AB OPERE PUBLICO: TANDEMQUE / RECESSIT LIBERIS APUD LEBANON UBI SEMIANNUM / FERE EXACTO OBDORMIVIT IN IESU ANNO 1702 / NOVEBER 18 ETAT 80: VIR, INGENII ACUMINE, / PONDERE JUDICII, PRUDENTIA, CHARITATE, SANCTIS / LABORIBUS, ET OMNIMODA VITAE SANCTITATE PERIT- / -IAQUOQUE ET VI CONCIONANDI NULLI SECUNDUS.

### Historical Inscriptions

In 1808 a monument was erected in the Navy Yard at Washington, D.C., in honor of the country's naval heroes. It consisted of a Doric column surrounded by six figures. The following words appeared on the south side of the pedestal:

HEIC DECORAE FUNCTORUM IN BELLO VIRORUM CINERES.<sup>2</sup>

On Castle Island in Boston Harbor the following inscription was found among the ruins of Castle William after its destruction by the British:

ANNO DECIMO TERTIO REGNI GULIELMI TERTII, MAG. BRIT. FR. ET HIB. REGIS SERENISSIMI, HOC MUNIMENTUM, EX EJUS NOMINE WILHELMI CASTELLUM NUNCUPATUM, FUIT INCEPTUM; ANNO SECUNDO REGNI ANNAE, MAG. BRIT. FR. ET HIB. REGINAE SERENISSIMAE, PERFECTUM, ANNOQ. DOMINI 1703; A TRIBUNO WOLFGANGO WIL-



HELMO ROMERO REGIARUM MAJESTATUM  
SEPTENTRIONALIS AMERICAЕ ARCHITECTO  
MILITARI PALMARIO CONSTRUCTUM.<sup>3</sup>

For Governor William Tryon's Palace, New Bern, North Carolina, one of the outstanding colonial buildings,<sup>4</sup> the following inscription was composed:

GULIELMO TRYON, ARMIGERO REGNANTE  
PROVINCIA, AN. DOM. 1771, AUGUSTO HUIC  
AEDIFICIO EA CARMINA VOVIT GULIELMUS  
DRAPER, BALNEI EQUES, MANILLAE VIC-  
TOR:

Rege pio felix diris inimica tyrannis  
Virtuti has aedes libera terra dedit.  
Sint domus et dominus seclis exempla futuris;  
Hinc artes, mores, justiciamque colant.  
D. D. D.<sup>5</sup>

### Some Boston Inscriptions

At the Boston Latin School, on a marble tablet incised in black, appear these lines dedicated to a distinguished, early teacher:<sup>6</sup>

EZEKIEL · CHEEVER / HVIVS · SCHOLAE ·  
PRAECEPTOR / PER · ANNOS · PROPE · OCTO ·  
ET · TRIGINTA / LONDINII · NATVS · A.D.  
MDCXIV · VIII · KAL. FEB. / IBI · EDVCATVS ·  
IN · SCHOLA CHISTS · HOSPITAL · DICTA /  
IN · NVMERVM · CIVIVM · ACADEMICORVM ·  
COLLEGII · EMMANVEL · IN · VNIVERSI-  
TATE · CANTABRIGIENSI / ASCITVS · A.D.  
MDCXXXII · PRIDIE · ID. IAN. / HANC · PE-  
TIIT · TERRAM · A.D. MDCXXXVII / PRAE-  
POSITVS · HVIC · SCHOLAE · A.D. MDCLXX ·  
VIII · ID. IAN. / OBIIT · A.D. MDCCVIII · XII ·  
KAL. SEPT / VIXIT · PIE · ANNIS LXXXXIV /  
COTTON · MATHER · DISCIPVLVS · GRATVS ·  
HVIC / OMNEM · NOVAE · ANGLIAE · ERVDI-  
TIONEM · ASCRIPSIT

On matching bronze tablets in the school are commemorated alumni and students who died in World War I, and students who survived World War I. The inscriptions are the work probably of Dr. Robert Montraville Green, a distinguished physician of Boston, Class of '98:<sup>7</sup>

IVVENES DILECTISSIMI / STVDIIS ALITI  
NOBILIBVS / MAXIMA FORTITVDINE / MOR-  
TEM PRO ALIIS OPPETENTES / DE VOLVN-  
TATE ET DE FACTO MARTYRES / PLACIDAM  
NOBIS QVIETEM PARAVERE / VITAM SIBI  
SEMPITERNAM

PERMVLTI QVOQVE DILECTISSIMI / STV-  
DIIS ALITI EISDEM / MARTYRES DE VOLVN-  
TATE / PERICVLO PRO ALIIS OPPETITO /  
FELICITER REDVCES / PLACIDA NVNC NO-  
BISCVM QVIETEM / LAVDE GRATIAQVE NOS-  
TRA / GAUDENTES PERFRVNTVR

About 1930 new wings were added to the school. On the balustrade of the rear terrace is carved this inscription, commemorating their dedication. Dr. Green is the author:

AEDES HAS NOVAS AMPLIORES DISCI-  
PLINAE SALVTARI VETERI / STVDIISQVE  
VOTAS HVMANIS IN ANNOS SECVNDOS FV-  
TVROS / FIDE SPE CARITATE MAXIMA  
PVERIS NOSTRIS REVERENTER / PATRI-  
AEQVE AMERICANAE GRATISSIME DEDI-  
CAMVS

Most recent is this inscription, by Mr. W. J. Roche of the faculty, on a bronze tablet which lists alumni and students who died in World War II:

DISCIPVLIS HVIVS SCHOLAE / QUI BELLO  
MAXIMO CRVDELISSIMO / GENTIVM OBLITI  
SVI PACEM ET / LIBERTATEM NOBIS MEMO-  
RIAM SEMPITERNAM / SIBI ADEPTI SVNT  
AMORIS CAUSA.

### Some Missouri Inscriptions

On a marble tablet, incised in gold and affixed to the wall of the vestibule of Saint Francis Xavier (University) Church in Saint Louis, stands this fascinating inscription:

S : M : O : P : N :<sup>8</sup> / In memoriam insignis bene-  
ficii / per MARIAM accepti. / A. D. 1849, grassante  
hic peste,<sup>9</sup> quā / prope sex millia civium, paucos  
intra / menses, interiērunt, Rector, Professores ac /  
Alumni hujus Universitatis,<sup>10</sup> in tanto vitae / dis-  
crimine constituti, ad MARIAM, / Matrem DEI,  
Matrem Hominum confugerunt, / votoque sese ob-  
strinxerunt decorandi imaginem / ejus coronā ar-  
genteā,<sup>11</sup> si ad unum omnes incolumes / servaren-  
tur,<sup>12</sup> placuit Divino Filio tanta in / Divinam Matrem  
fiducia. Etenim exitiosa pestis, / vetante MARIA,  
muros Universitatis / invadere non fuit ausa; et  
totā mirante / civitate, ē ducentis et pluribus con-  
victoribus, / ne unus quidem lue infectus fuit, /  
Grati MARIAE Filii. / P. Fanning Sculptsit.

Still legible on a modest head-stone in Calvary Cemetery, Saint Louis, are these pathetic, century-old lines:

Reverendo Patricio A. Ward / Hibernia orto qui  
Patriae pro / missionibus valedixit et XVIII annis /  
in sacro ministerio actis, die / primo Novembris  
A. D. MDCCCLVIII / et aetatis suae XLII / Sancti  
Ludovici / Obit. / Mater afflicta hunc / lapidem  
erexit. Amici / ejus et fratres, ut sit in pace, orate.

An important figure in early Missouri ecclesiastical history is Felix de Andreis, C.M. On the marble slab over his grave at Saint Mary's Seminary, Perryville, Missouri, are these handsomely carved words:<sup>13</sup>

HIC JACET / FELIX DE ANDREIS Congrega-  
tionis / Missionis in America primus superior /  
natus Demontii Italicis Cisalpinis / prid: Id. De-  
cembris / MDCCCLXXVIII. / In American migravit  
MDCCCXVI / Obit St. Ludovici id: Octobris /  
MDCCCXX. / Vir Apostolicis Virtutibus ingenio/  
eruditione et eloquentia maxime / conspicuus. /  
Mortales ejus exuvias fratres ejus / Congregationis

DISCI-  
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Missionis sacerdotes / hunc in locum transtulerunt, /  
IX Kal. Oct: MDCCCXXXVII. / Mementote prae-  
positorum vestrorum / quorum intuentes exitum /  
conversationis imitamini fidem.

Although written on parchment, the following in-  
scription may be included here since it was deposited  
in a cornerstone—that of the College Church of  
Saint Louis University when located at Ninth and  
Washington Streets:

Pridie Idus Aprilis, / Anno reparaatae salutis  
MDCCCXL, / Americanae Independentiae assertae  
et vindicatae / LXIV, / Gregorio XVI Pontifice Max-  
imo, / Martino Van Buren Foederatae Americae  
Praeside, / Admodum Rev. Patre Joanne Roothaan  
Proposito / Generali Societatis Jesu, / Lilburn W.  
Boggs Missouri Gubernatore, / Gulielmo Carr Lane  
Urbs Sancti Ludovici Profecto,<sup>14</sup> / Rev. Patre P. J.  
Verhaegen Vice-Provinciae / Missouriana Societatis  
Jesu Vice-Provinciali, / Rev. Patre J. A. Elet Sancti  
Ludovici Universitatis / Rectore, / Reverendissimus  
D. Joseph Rosati Episcopus Sti. / Ludovici, Lapidem  
hunc angulare Ecclesiae, / Deo Opt. Max. / Sub  
invocatione / Sancti Francisci Xaverii, Atque /  
Sancti Aloysii / Studiosae Iuventuti patroni, / In  
Urbe Sancti Ludovici aedificandae, / Assistantibus  
Sancti Ludovici Universitatis Rectore, / Profes-  
soribus, Auditoribus ac Alumnis, / Necnon D'no  
Georgio Barnett et D'no Stuart Matthews / Archi-  
tectis, / Ac D'no Carolo Cutts muratorum Prae-  
fecto, / Solemni ritu benedixit et in fundamentis po-  
suit, / Coram magna populi / Frequentia.<sup>15</sup>

Leo Max Kaiser

Loyola University (Chicago)

#### NOTES

1 Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum Latinarumque Amer-  
icae; cf. *CJ* 45 (1950) 335; 51 (1955) 69-81; etc. 2 Text  
reproduced from Timothy Alden, *A Collection of American  
Epitaphs and Inscriptions* (New York 1814) V 101. 3 Text  
reproduced from Alden, op. cit. (*supra*, note 2) I 51. 4 Cf.  
Federal Writers' Project, *North Carolina, A Guide to the Old  
North State* (Chapel Hill 1939) 231-232. 5 Text reproduced  
from Alden, op. cit. (*supra*, note 2) I 224. 6 Photographs of,  
and information on these inscriptions were sent me by Mr.  
W. J. Roche of the Boston Latin School faculty. For the  
Latin epitaph over Cheever's grave, see *CJ* 51 (1955) 143. 7  
Such is the opinion of Mr. Lee Dunn, the school historian. 8  
*Sancta Maria, Ora Pro Nobis*. 9 The great cholera plague.  
10 Saint Louis University. 11 This crown was later placed  
in the University museum. 12 The punctuation at this point  
should be a period instead of a comma, since a new sentence  
begins with *placuit*. 13 For a photograph of this inscription  
I am indebted to the Reverend Cornelius Ryan, C.M. 14  
Should be *Praefecto*. 15 Text reproduced from Richard  
Edwards and M. Hopewell, *Edwards's Great West and Her  
Commercial Metropolis* (Saint Louis 1860) 369-370.

The last of the Ciceronians, Sallust is also in a  
sense the first of the imperial prose-writers. His  
style, compressed, rhetorical, and very highly pol-  
ished, is in strong contrast to the graceful and fluid  
periods which were then, and for some time later  
continued to be, the predominant fashion, and fore-  
shadows the manner of Seneca or Tacitus.—J. W.  
Mackail, *Latin Literature*.

#### Rhetorical Connotations of *Venenum*

(Concluded from page 51)

Since the accusation is poisoning, the *status* is  
technically definition, but in the argument the de-  
clamer asserts that since no law covers the crime,  
it must be prosecuted under the nearest charge; this  
seems fundamentally to base the plea upon *inscrip-  
tum maleficium* or *sylogismus*. The declamer main-  
tains that a murder is committed not only by those  
who slay with a sword, but also by robbers or  
by those who push a victim into the sea or off a  
precipice. Subsequent development of the case more  
nearly fits the *status* of *finitio*, for it is argued that  
poison may properly be defined as a potion given to  
cause death, and that not its composition, but its  
effects, must be taken into account. The concluding  
assertion is that the woman's professed disbelief in  
the doctors' warning gave no sanction to her conduct.

Case 246 is even more pertinent, for just as in the  
Apuleian context it is a sleeping potion which is de-  
scribed as *venenum*. The theme runs thus:

Qui fortiter fecerat, bello imminente soporem ab noverca  
subiectum bibit. Causam dixit tamquam desertor. Absolutus  
accusat novercam veneficii.

The advice to the declamer decisively designates  
the case as depending on definition, and terms the  
sleeping potion poison because of its effects and the  
giver's intentions. In the *sermo* the pleader is re-  
minded that both prosecution and defense interpre-  
tations must be kept clearly in view: the defendant  
will deny that the draught was poison since it did not  
kill and was not deadly, while the plaintiff will term  
it *venenum* because it was a drug and acted contrary  
to nature (a pet phrase of the Stoics), and by caus-  
ing desertion added something to the ordinary effects  
of the drug *per se*. The case is typical of the declam-  
atory repertoire in that it involves the stock figures  
of both the *vir fortis* and the *noverca*; the tradi-  
tional vindictiveness of the latter could be counted  
upon to create prejudice against the defendant, as  
also in declamation 350.

This examination of the evidence in declamatory  
theory and practice for employment of *venenum* in  
loosely figurative senses demonstrates clearly, I  
think, why Apuleius, trained rhetorician that he was,  
turned automatically to the phrase *soporiferum  
venenum* in describing the sleeping potion which was  
mixed into the wine poured by Thrasyllus. The de-  
sign of Charite was hostile, the effect was contrary  
to Nature, and the result operated to change the  
bodily functioning of her victim. On all counts the  
drug comports with the rhetorical connotations of  
*venenum*.

Charles S. Rayment

Carleton College

#### NOTES

1 *Met.* 8. 1-14. 2 *Ibid.* 8.11. 3 This, rather than "to  
forestall," would seem the natural interpretation of *ad*;  
though if it is taken in the sense of "affecting," the drug  
might have reference to either assisting or preventing. 4  
*Inst.* 7.3.10. 5 *Ibid.* 7.3.7. 6 *Ibid.* 7.8.1-3.

# The Classical Bulletin

Published by the Department of Classical Languages  
at Saint Louis University

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Volume 35      March 1959      Number 5

## EDITORIAL

### Philippi—B.C. 42-1959 A.D.

*Brutus.* How ill this taper burns! Ha! who comes here?  
I think it is the weakness of mine eyes  
That shapes this monstrous apparition.  
It comes upon me. Art thou any thing?  
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,  
That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare?  
Speak to me what thou art.  
*Ghost.* Thy evil spirit, Brutus.  
*Brutus.* Why comest thou?  
*Ghost.* To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.  
*Brutus.* Well; then I shall see thee again?  
*Ghost.* Ay, at Philippi.  
*Brutus.* Why, I shall see thee at Philippi, then.

Thus Shakespeare, in his *Julius Caesar* (4.3.275-287), portrays the troubled dreamer, Brutus, co-leader with Cassius of the republican armies that had been gathering since the assassination of Julius Caesar two years before, as Brutus reclines wakefully in his tent on the eve of the great battle at Philippi. Thus, too, in poetic fancy, he foreshadows the outcome of that conflict, fought two thousand years ago, in 42 B.C., and thus having its bimillennial year in 1959.

Ancient Philippi lay at the borders of Macedonia and Thrace, a city founded by Philip of Macedon in 358/7 B.C. and perpetuating the name of the celebrated Macedonian king, father of Alexander the Great. The city was situated to the east of Mount Pangaeus and became the chief mining center for the Pangaeian gold fields. Here the republican forces had some eighty thousand troops, supplemented by allied contingents—surely a formidable force, when one considers the somewhat unimpressive numbers making up ancient armies in some even of the most famous military engagements. Opposing them, the triumvirs, Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus, had, during the summer of 42 B.C., succeeded in transporting their own armies across the Adriatic and were likewise poised for the struggle.

Actually, there were two battles at Philippi. The earlier was indecisive. Antony defeated the forces under the command of Cassius, who subsequently took his own life. Brutus, however, prevailed over the units commanded by Octavian. In the subsequent stalemate, Brutus, against his own inclinations, was compelled by his own soldiers to risk a second engagement. Here the triumvirs were completely victorious, and Brutus, following the lead of Cassius, ended his troubled career by suicide.

This outcome, heavily freighted as it was for the historical events that were to follow, directly prepared the way for the new principate destined to emerge at Rome and provide a pattern of government for some five hundred years—or fifteen hundred, if we think of its continuation in the Eastern empire. Much lay ahead, to be sure, before Octavian was to stand forth as the undisputed lord of the Roman world. Yet emerge he did. Had the republican armies, rather than those of the triumvirs, been victorious at Philippi, the whole current of Western history might well have been altered.

And so Philippi summons us to reflection. It reminds us, too, of the grim fact that here there was intestine, civil strife—of all warfare the most heinous and hideous. It reminds us, too, beyond the principals already mentioned, that distinguished personages participated in the encounter. Not the least of these was Quintus Horatius Flaccus, the poet Horace. He was in Athens at the time of Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C., as a student of philosophy and literature. The interruption to his scholastic career was a drastic one. Horace soon found himself aligned with the republican forces, then suffering, seemingly, from a dearth of officer material. In any case, Horace, at twenty-three, was a military tribune, in command of a Roman legion that saw active duty at Philippi. Horace's own share is wryly summed up in his *relicta non bene parmula*—"abandoning, in unheroic wise, my ineffective shield." But it is a tribute to the poet's innate worth and genius that, after several hard years, he found himself in the full favor of the man Octavian whom he had opposed, and became the poet laureate of the new principate.

Other distinguished Romans, at Philippi and thereafter, were likewise opponents of Octavian—to survive, many of them, as beneficiaries of Octavian's clemency. Gaius Asinius Pollio fought for Antony, and lived to become a great patron of letters in Octavian's Rome. But all such outcomes were foreshadowed by the events of 42 B.C.

"I shall see thee at Philippi," said Shakespeare's Brutus. The ghost of Caesar did not appear, but the more substantial military might of his professed avengers bore none the less decisively against his hereditary opponents.

—W.C.K.



### Salute to *Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft*

Currently at hand are several numbers of the eleventh volume (1958) of *Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft*, published by the Austrian Society for Humanities (herausgegeben von der österreichischen humanistischen Gesellschaft) at Innsbruck (Universitätsverlag Wagner), under the editorship of Professor Robert Muth, of the University of Innsbruck. With ten volumes now completed and the second decade of publication under way, the *Anzeiger* has become an established factor in the world of classical philology. Its appearance some eleven years ago was a bold venture, for the challenges to a successful bibliographical journal are many and exacting.

There are now four numbers each year, running each to sixty-four half-pages, and dated, respectively, January, April, July, and October. The contents vary somewhat in kind from issue to issue. Thus for July 1958, under "Der Forschungsbericht," Walter Kraus begins an extensive *Bericht* on Ovid (pp. 130-146). Under "Besprechungen," several reviewers deal with seven different works (pp. 147-170). There follow: "Anzeigen," brief notices of sixteen different works (pp. 169-176); "Büchereinkauf," entries of items without comment (pp. 175-180); "Bibliographische Notizen," often listing references to reviews (pp. 179-184); "Zeitschriften und Jahrbücher," commonly including the tables of contents of a volume or so each of selected journals (pp. 183-188); "Hinweise" und "Personalnachrichten" (pp. 189-192).

Individual numbers are well printed on good paper stock, with heavy covers, though the dimensions, some 11¾ by 8¼ inches, may seem a bit cumbersome for a journal-type of publication. The *Anzeiger* is not, of course, a full substitute for the discontinued Bursian's *Jahresbericht*, or for *Bibliotheca Philologica Classica*. Yet it is a valuable associate of the excellent *L'Année Philologique* of Marouzeau, of the Dutch *Klassieke Bibliographie*, the impressive new *Lustrum* begun in 1956, and the capable review surveys that have been appearing from time to time in *The Classical World* since 1952. In some ways, too, it is comparable to the British *Year's Work in Classical Studies*, discontinued some years ago.

Perhaps one cannot hope that all such now existing bibliographical publications will ultimately see their way to a fusion of efforts that might result in, say, a single, worldwide bibliographical journal and a similar single, worldwide review or *Berichte* journal. It can even be argued that a certain plurality of such organs has the advantage of friendly competition. In such a setting, the *Anzeiger* is filling a capable role.

Saint Louis University

—W. C. K.

### Mercury and Maia—Brace of Verses *Ode to Maia (Latinized)*

Mother of Hermes! and still youthful Maia  
May I sing to thee  
As thou wast hymned on the shores of Baiae?  
Or may I woo thee  
In earlier Sicilian? or thy smiles  
Seek as they once were sought in Grecian isles,  
By bards who died content on pleasant sward,  
Leaving great verse unto a little clan?  
O, give me their old vigor, and unheard  
Save of the quiet primrose, and the span  
Of heaven and few ears,  
Rounded by thee, my song should die away  
Content as theirs,  
Rich in the simple worship of a day.—*Keats*.<sup>1</sup>

O Maia, mater Mercurii et decens  
hymno vetusto vel Siculis modis  
verene concentu licebit  
iam mihi te canere exsequive  
gratas poetis delicias tuas  
Graecis; beatis dulce quibus mori  
laetis in arvis, qui dederunt  
cantica genti hebeti venusta?  
Talis mihi sit vis, volitabit et,  
caelo audiente aut flore, gratum tibi  
beatum item carmenque, Maia,  
te celebrans pretio potitum.

### Horace, Carm. 1.10 (Englished)

O Mercury, Atlas' gifted son,  
Who with your civil speech and graceful games  
Have changed the savage ways of ancient men  
And wisely molded them to loftier aims,  
I sing to you, the messenger of Jove  
And all the gods, the lyre's inventor too,  
Who take delight in playing clever pranks  
If you should have some thieving stunt to do.  
You once by stealth Apollo's steers purloined  
And, though his baby brother, he scolded you—  
But had to laugh despite himself to find  
That you had taken all his arrows, too.  
Again, when Priam with his ransom came  
From the royal Trojan palace, robed in grief,  
You slipped him past the low Thessalian fires  
And the night-bound camp to meet the sulking chief.  
A welcome servant to the gods above  
And in the underworld, you guide the throng  
Of happy souls to homes their goodness won,  
And with your wand you herd the shades along.  
Bellarmine College, Robert E. Quinlan, S. J.  
Plattsburgh, New York

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> John Keats wrote his *Ode To Maia* on May 1, 1818. The poem represents the artist's desire to attain union with the poets of Greece and Rome in their artistic expression of worship of the gods.

## Breviora

## Meaning of the Trisagion

The trisagion ("agios o Theos," etc.) is one of the oldest Christian liturgical formulas. It occurs in many rites; in the Roman it is used in the *improperia* on Good Friday, where it is accompanied by a Latin translation.

Curiously enough, every discussion of the formula and every translation into English that I have seen interprets the words in a way which is grammatically impossible. All the nominatives in this formula are translated as vocatives, perhaps under the impression that the article "o" is the interjection ("O holy God," etc.). The words are extremely simple Greek. The article accompanies the subject ( $\delta \Theta ε ο ς$ ), and the adjective without the article has its normal predicative force. The first phrase, "agios o Theos," is a simple declarative sentence, which one might translate tentatively as "God is holy." This is also the meaning of the Latin translation *sanctus Deus*, where the noun is the subject and the adjective is the predicate. The second and third phrases of the formula ("agios ischyros, agios athanatos") also exhibit a simple though slightly unusual form, since each clause or sentence contains two adjectives in the nominative case. The key to their interpretation lies in the triple anaphora ("agios . . . agios . . . agios"). In Greek, when two nominatives stand as a sentence, there are three possibilities: if both have the article, the sentence is a statement of identity; if one has the article, it is the subject and the other is the predicate; if neither has the article, each is a predicate. Taking account of the anaphora, one can come close to the meaning by some such paraphrase as the following: "God is holy; He who is holy is mighty; He who is holy is immortal." But this is not quite right, because it fails to take account of the concluding words of the formula: "eleison imas" ( $\epsilon \lambda \epsilon \eta \sigma \alpha \nu \eta \mu \alpha \varsigma$ ), *miserere nobis*, "have mercy on us." These words show that the whole formula is not in the third person, but in the second. If English would permit the usage, the verbs in our translation ought to be "are" instead of "is."

## The Bilingual Form of the Formula

The use of a noun in a second person construction ( $\alpha \gamma \iota \circ \varsigma < \epsilon \iota > \delta \Theta ε ο ς$ ) is not abnormal Greek, but it is very unusual Latin, and it is impossible in English or the other standard modern European languages. This can best be illustrated by a literal translation: "God are holy; holy are strong; holy are immortal; have mercy on us." These words have meaning in English only when juxtaposed to the Greek as a translation. One might say the same of the Latin translation used in the Roman rite (*sanctus Deus, sanctus fortis, sanctus immortalis, miserere nobis*). While the Latin is not quite meaningless, the sense of the words is so doubtful that they can be understood readily only in connection with the Greek. The bilingual form of the formula is, I believe, most probably to be explained by this fact. The *trisagion* is an extremely ancient liturgical formula; it may even be apostolic in origin. It was regarded as ancient even at the time when the liturgy was first translated into Latin. Because of the differences between Greek and Latin, a simple translation was ritually ineffective since it was not readily to be understood. Both the original Greek and the translation were retained in the liturgy.

Maurice P. Cunningham

Lawrence College

## Latin as a Language of Science

*Endeavour*, a quarterly review designed to record the progress of the sciences in the service of mankind, published in London, had in its October 1958 issue an editorial on "The Language of Science" (pp. 171-172). In part, one reads:

"The progress of science depends upon many factors, and not least among these is the existence of satisfactory arrangements for the rapid exchange of new ideas and experimental results between research workers having similar interests. . . . There is, of course, no lack of scientific literature, both books and journals: the *World List of Scientific Periodicals* now lists some 50,000 titles. . . . Yet wide reading is becoming increasingly important, for it is very frequently in the fields where several branches of science overlap that the most exciting results are obtained. . . .

"While the problem of the sheer quantity of literature is a serious one, it is at least one to which some effective answers have been found and applied. Most important, of course, are the various abstracting services. . . .

"The no less important question of the language in which scientific work should be presented remains, however, largely unresolved. It is, like so many others in the modern world, one on which it is generally agreed that an international policy is urgently necessary but on which it is in fact difficult to get any agreement at all.

"A universal language for all scientific communication is obviously desirable on many grounds, but both its choice and its achievement are likely to be beset by great difficulties. The choice of any single language for the communication of results in so important a field would naturally be beset by all kinds of political and nationalistic obstacles. Many of these might be overcome if one adopted a non-living language such as Latin or an artificial language such as Esperanto or Interlingua. Artificial languages are open to the fundamental objection that their very nature and purpose make them unsuitable for conveying subtle shades of meaning: they are satisfactory enough for describing facts but inadequate for conveying ideas, especially unfamiliar ones. Latin is free from this defect, for in its long evolution it acquired considerable flexibility. Its evolution virtually stopped, however, before modern science began. Its present vocabulary and syntax therefore are inappropriate for modern needs, as it is well known to every university orator who has been called upon to describe in Latin the work of scientists. It is a great pity that Latin was allowed to lapse as the international language of scholars, but it is doubtful whether it is now feasible to revive it. . . ."

So far *Endeavour*, a journal published by the Imperial Chemical Industries. It may sound quite peculiar that Latin, in which modern science was formulated and in which Newton, Descartes, Leibnitz, Huyghens, Euler reported about their discoveries, should be "inappropriate."

Latin fulfilled for a long time another task: it served as a medium for scientific translation.

The efforts of the university orators of the British universities who try to circumscribe scientific terms in Ciceronian phrases could be misleading. None of the great scientists using Latin could have done so. Should Erasmus have written in vain his anti-Ciceronianus and Comenius defended the Latin of his *Janua linguarum*?

We can hardly use Varro's or Cicero's terms to express modern scientific notions, but is Peano so far away?

Should a language in which Boerhaave formulated the basis of modern medicine, Linnaeus modern botany, Gauss mathematics, be inappropriate?

The issue is the coinage of appropriate terms, or rather the usage of Graeco-Latin terms in correct, but rhetorically unburdened Latin.

Since Bembo would not use any word he could not find in Cicero, there are two tendencies: those who circumscribe in cumbersome yard-long phrases one term and the others who dare to coin necessary words. At present these two schools are represented by the university orators on the one hand and on the other hand by such Latinists as those of the missionary order which publishes in Barcelona *Palaestra Latina*.

For three decades they have toiled in their journal on a flexible, concise Latin, creating, rejecting and recreating new terms suitable for the modern world. The *Nova et Vetera* of Father Jos. Ma. Mir, C.M.F., is a sample. Should not Latin still be the instrument for the debabelization of scientific communication, at least for the Western world?

George Stolz

Annhurst College,  
Putnam, Connecticut

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## Book Reviews

Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (Galaxy Book 7). New York, Oxford University Press, 1957. Pp. vii, 523. \$2.95.

This Galaxy Book edition is a reprint of the book which first appeared in 1940 and was revised in 1944. Though not new on the market, it deserves some comment, since it is perhaps not so widely known in classical circles as it deserves. Charles Norris Cochrane was a brilliant professor of Greek and Roman history at University College, Toronto, where he died in 1946. In this study he produced a truly monumental work which is, as the subtitle indicates, a survey of thought and action from Augustus to Augustine. The intellectual (and spiritual) world has never witnessed a deeper gulf than that between the time of Augustus and Augustine. Ordinarily, that gulf is not bridged by classical scholars, nor is the return trip made in patristic or mediaeval studies, with the result, as the author notes in his preface, "that classical and Christian studies have become dissociated with consequences which are, perhaps, unfortunate for both."

Leaving through the book, one comes upon such tantalizing remarks as, "Vergil contains the elements of a philosophy of history such as was subsequently to find fuller and more adequate expression in the work of Augustine" (p. 71); "the monumental effort of Livy to achieve a 'rationalization' of Roman life" (p. 96); "Lucan with his vain regrets for the republic . . . that betray an utter lack of accord between the writer and the world in which he lived" (p. 163); "With Juvenal, a similar incapacity for adjustment takes the form of a stinging criticism of conventional 'vice'; as though the lash of sarcasm and invective could be expected to do anything except to exacerbate the sore" (p. 163); "Lactantius deserves, in much more than a purely verbal sense, to be called 'the Christian Cicero'" (p. 191); "Theodosius . . . shattered the foundations of *Romanitas* and crossed the divide which separates the ancient from the medieval world" (p. 318); "the function of fourth-century Christianity was to heal the wounds inflicted by man on himself in classical times and, by transcending while still doing justice to the elements of truth contained in philosophic paganism, to revive and give direction to the expiring spiritual ideals of classical antiquity" (p. 360); "Augustine was born into a world the perplexities of which have probably never been exceeded by any period, before or since, in human history" (p. 380); "in the Trinity, he <Augustine> discovered a principle capable of saving the reason as well as the will, and thus redeeming human personality as a whole" (p. 384); "the limitations of Classicism were those of 'reason'" (p. 400); "The doctrine of sin and grace marks, in its most acute form, the breach between Classicism and Christianity" (p. 451); "To the Christians the failure of classical historiography was the result of its inability to discover the true 'cause' of human being and motivation" (p. 474).

Perhaps these chance quotations will provoke others to take up this book for the first time; frequent reference to it is almost bound to follow. For this is that rare type of book that requires and merits more than one reading.

Marcus Anthony Haworth, S.J.

Saint Louis University

Moses Hadas, *Seneca's Thyestes*: Translated, with an Introduction. New York, The Liberal Arts Press, 1957. Pp. viii, 32; paperbound, 45c.

Seneca's *Thyestes* is rarely read, even by classics students, though its mythological subject is very well known to them. Its present appearance in new dress is the work of Professor Moses Hadas,<sup>1</sup> who apologizes for "our idiom <which> inevitably reduces Seneca's rich tapestries and full-throated diapasons to gaudy daubs and tuneless tinkles, with the result that the strained emotion is not only left unsupported but compounded by language which a modern must find grotesque" (p. viii).

Though the story of Thyestes and Atreus is common knowledge, neither a Greek nor a Roman model prior to Seneca's play for this work has survived. It is unfortunate, too, that we do not possess the *Thyestes* of Quintus Ennius, produced in 169 B.C., a year which corresponds with that of the death of the epic poet. However, a possible Roman model was the *Thyestes* of Lucius Varius Rufus, friend of Vergil and Horace; Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.98) mentions the play, and Horace (*Carm.* 1.16.17-21) likewise refers to it.

An introduction of four pages by the translator provides an adequate aid to the reading of the play. In addition to a recounting of the myth of the Tantalidae, Mr. Hadas gives the reasons for Seneca's lack of attractiveness to modern

readers, so that they will come to the work with more tolerance.

The reviewer finds that Mr. Hadas is quite successful in rendering this spectacular and grandiose rhetorical tragedy, and wishes to quote a sample from the speech of the Chorus in Scene 2 after Atreus' departure (Atreus has just declared his intent to unleash his fury on his brother Thyestes). The passage illustrates the forcefulness of the Hadas translation; the Chorus is addressing King Atreus, who has left the scene:

What fury scourges you to shed blood by turn, to approach the scepter through crime? You do not realize, in your craving for palaces, wherein kingship consists. It is not wealth nor the purple robe nor the royal tiara nor the shiny gold doors which make a king. A king is a man who has put aside fear and the distemper of a brooding heart; who is not moved by overweening ambition or the mercurial favor of the unthinking mob, by the yield of the western mines or the billows of gold carried on Tagus' clear channel or the harvest trodden in Libya's torrid threshing floors. . . .

One typographical error noted occurs in line 18 of page v: "Chrysippus" for "Chrysippus."<sup>2</sup>

Lawrence Giangrande

Saint Louis University

## NOTES

1 The *Thyestes* appears in the *Library of Liberal Arts*, where Mr. Hadas has already published translations of the Senecan *Medea* and *Oedipus*. 2 Chrysippus is the son of Pelops and Astyoche. He was killed by his half-brothers, Atreus and Thyestes, who were then banished by Pelops under a curse of mutual fratricide. This curse in its effects was not dissipated until Orestes was absolved by the Court of the Areopagus.

Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Harvard University Press, 1958. Pp. 365; chart. \$6.75.

Some men achieve distinction in their writing only after many years and many books. Professor Cedric H. Whitman has already written two significant works, *Sophocles: A Study in Heroic Humanism* (1959) and now *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*. Both are a credit to him, and both have won considerable honors. This book on Homer received Honorable Mention in the Third Annual Harvard University Press Faculty Prize for the most distinguished contribution to scholarship by a member of the Harvard Faculty to be published by the Harvard University Press; (see *CB* 35 [Nov. 1958] 8).

Mr. Whitman combines three qualities rarely found together: (1) he has an admirable command of his primary as well as secondary sources; this alone is apparently enough nowadays to make a person merit the name of scholar; (2) he writes exceptionally well; his own particular literary style is a pleasure to read; and (3) he has original ideas of his own which he wishes to propose, and these ideas, admirable in themselves, are fascinatingly presented. All these qualities were true also of Whitman's book on Sophocles. They are even more striking in his brilliant work on Homer.

This study will become a primary document in Homeric scholarship in our own day. There is so much material covered that it would be impossible to discuss it all without a really extended review. But at least an attempt can be made to point out some of the highlights.

Here is probably the first attempt in modern times to integrate, within the covers of a single book, the most important recent discoveries in the fields of archaeology, linguistics, history, anthropology, comparative oral literature, and literary criticism, as they relate to Homer. This in itself is a monumental achievement. But Whitman does not, by any means, stop at mere integration of the scholarly discoveries of the past thirty-five years; he has more material to present, which includes a penetrating discussion of the imagery in the *Iliad*, particularly the overwhelming image of fire, the Homeric character and tradition, a superb analysis of Achilles (the first real tragic portrait in Western literature), fate, time, and the gods, a brief discussion of the *Odyssey* (the book centers primarily on the *Iliad*), and what is Whitman's most original and startling contribution, a detailed analysis of the geometric design of the epic (an elaborate chart is provided at the end of the book, in addition to the individual charts presented in the text as the various parts are discussed), with an astounding analysis of its relationship to geometric pottery and the Hellenic sense of form. This book is a masterpiece of reconstruction.

For Whitman, Homer is still the oral poet *par excellence*, whose date can be set in the eighth century B.C. (ca. 725). But as an oral poet, Homer, though working with the traditional epic building blocks (formulaic language), still is a unity, still is a creative literary genius, whose achievement will be even more amazing after one reads Whitman's analysis. Achilles becomes alive once more as: "Personal integrity in Achilles achieves the form and authority of immanent divinity, with its inviolable, lonely singleness, half-repellent because of its almost inhuman austerity, but irresistible in its passion and perfected selfhood" (p. 182). In the *Iliad* Whitman clearly sees that "Heroism cannot be maintained in isolation, or it becomes nothing. Though the heroic nature partakes of the absolute qualities of divinity itself, and though the higher it looks, the less it can endure the compromises of the human level, still its human connections alone justify it as a human phenomenon" (p. 195).

Though Whitman admits that no analysis is as penetrating as the Homeric Achilles himself, he lucidly strikes at the central significance of the Homeric achievement in the figure of Achilles, who for Whitman is the core of the *Iliad*, when he says: "But the miracle remains that he <Homer>, and apparently he first, imagined the transcendence of the older scheme by a figure who would typify, not material triumph, but the triumph of the spirit amid self-destruction and that he could dramatize this paradox as the search for the integrity of the self against a panoramic background involving all the forces of the world, human and divine" (p. 220).

The work is a masterpiece of scholarship, literary analysis, and original thought, and is the best book on Homer available today. It is a "must" on the reading list of all those who profess an interest in great literature.

Colgate University

John E. Rexine

Richmond Lattimore, *The Poetry of Greek Tragedy*. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958. Pp. 157. \$3.50.

This handsome book incorporates six lectures given at The Johns Hopkins University in January 1957 on the Percy Turnbull Memorial Lectureship of Poetry by the distinguished Hellenist and poet, Professor Richmond Lattimore, Paul Shorey Professor of Greek at Bryn Mawr College. It would not be amiss to say that Mr. Lattimore is one of the foremost and best known of American classicists to the reading public today because of the tremendous work that he has done to spread knowledge of the Greek classics through his excellent verse translations.

In his latest work, Mr. Lattimore has no really surprising thesis to present. Rather, he is interested in reaffirming, through careful examination of select texts from the Greek tragedians, the fact that the Greek tragedians were poets, and that Greek tragedy is essentially and pointedly poetic drama. Lattimore disclaims any single definition of tragedy and concentrates on the contribution that each of the three great Greek tragedians has to make to tragedy. Lattimore, in effect, re-emphasizes the creative but particular genius of each poet separately.

Through careful textual analyses of Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, *Persae*, *Septem contra Thebas*, *Prometheus Vinculus*, Sophocles' *Ajax* and *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and Euripides' *Medea*, *Helena*, and *Bacchae*, Lattimore posits that poetry—"What is directed neither to emotion nor the intellect, but to the imagination . . ." (p. 8)—is used differently by each of the three tragic poets. Lattimore's work centers around the following observations:

"I suggest that we look for the special contribution of the poetry in some such phenomena as these: for Aeschylus, in enlargement; for Sophocles, in anomaly; for Euripides, in relief or idealization. For Aeschylus, poetry is basic—it comes first; this blows the simple plot and limited characterization into full scale drama. For Sophocles, drama comes first; in what puzzles or disturbs the coherent interpretation of complete drama, or at least stands unaccounted for in the economy we may look for the poetry. For Euripides, sometimes at least, the point comes first. We may find his poetry in what seems to have nothing to do with drama or in what is merely contrasted to it, or we may find his poetry, after all, in certain ideas or themes, succinctly expressed only in lyric terms, which yet hold all the meaning of the dramatic action" (pp. 8-9).

For Lattimore "poetry is always the basis of the tragedy" (p. 54), and this is the line that the book takes in an effort to enlarge and vitalize the appreciation of the reader of Greek tragedy. No new definition of tragedy is attempted. For Lattimore, each tragedian shapes his own view in his own way in each tragedy.

The Greek tragic poets, Lattimore points out, were not "pure" poets. Their poetry was determined by their verse and the dramatic action that they wished to portray. Their finest verse was achieved when the tragic poetry was dramatically inevitable as well as dramatically convincing. One is reminded, in this respect, of T. S. Eliot's comment that poetic drama, to be really effective, must express an area of human experience which no other form of literature can do so effectively. "It will only be 'poetry' when the dramatic situation has reached such a point of intensity that poetry becomes the natural utterance, because then it is the only language in which the emotions can be expressed at all." This Greek tragic poetry could and did do and much of modern dramatic verse is trying to do. Lattimore in the *Poetry of Greek Tragedy* has reasserted the naturalness and dramatic inevitability of poetry in Greek tragedy.

John E. Rexine

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#### NOTE

1 From T. S. Eliot, "Poetry and Drama," in *On Poetry and Poets* (London 1957) 74.

Robertus Muth and Ioannes Knobloch, editors, *Natalicium Carolo Jax Septuagenario a. d. VII. Kal. Dec. MCMXLV oblatum: Altertumswissenschaft, Humanismus, Sprachwissenschaft, Namenforschung, Orientalistik* (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft III: Band 2 [12] 73-166, Band 3 [13] 167-172). Innsbruck 1955.

Volume III and IV of the *Innsbrucker Beiträge* comprise the Festschrift in honor of Karl Jax, which may be purchased separately in two volumes. The first of these volumes contains a number of articles that should be of interest to students of antiquity. Since most of these are fairly short, it will be impossible to give a résumé of all of them, but from those which are here cited, some notion of the whole may be derived. In "Zur Vision vom Sonnenbelaubten Weibe (Apokalypse 12)" Father Paul Gaechter continues his explanation of the difficulties of the Apocalypse on the theory that it was written down from memory by a disciple of the Apostle who did not understand everything that he heard (cf. *Theological Studies* 9 [1948] 419-452). The exegete points out the difficulty of identifying the woman crowned with stars in 12.1 with the woman bearing a child in 12.2, and maintains that here and in the subsequent verses two separate narratives have been combined. Franz Hampl in "Beiträge zur Beurteilung des Historikers Tacitus" reverts to the opinion of scholars of a former generation who maintained that Tacitus, despite his defects, is still our best source for the history of the Claudian dynasty. Karl Ilg in "Zu den Trulli des fernsten Italien" gives an interesting account of a hike of thirty students through southeast Italy and the numerous houses and churches they encountered which were roofed over with flat stones laid in circles of constantly diminishing diameters. Alfons Wotschitzky in "Hochhäuser im antiken Rom" discusses the various imperial restrictions on the building of "skyscrapers" in Rome and comes to the conclusion that Martial in referring to an individual who had to climb up two hundred steps to get to his apartment may not have been guilty of exaggeration. Hermann Ammann in "Miscellanea Latina" would read: *hanc Graece conceptam caecis conscriptam litteris mittit for hanc Graecis conscriptam litteris mittit* (Caes. BGall. 5.45), since he believes that Caesar's secret orders to Q. Cicero were written in a code rather than simply in Greek, which would have been intelligible to the Gauls if they had intercepted them. Gustav Sausser in "Von der Sprache der Anatomie" notes that there are some 6,000 anatomical terms in use today. A lack of a knowledge of Greek on the part of doctors in recent years has led to a kind of "babylonische Sprachverwirrung," which a permanent international commission founded in 1950 is attempting to remedy. Georg Pflegerdorffer in "Zu Miscellaneus" corrects the general impression that Tertullian (*Adv. Val.* 12) was the first to use the word *miscellaneus* "im Sinne von Schrift gemischten Inhalts." In reality, Tertullian was still using the word in its earlier culinary sense. Edith Raybould in "How Far was English Syntax affected by Latin in the Age of Dr. Johnson?" comes to the conclusion that "the 'Latinisation' is comparatively superficial, though it bulks large, that it affects sentence rhythm and the choice of vocabulary rather than syntax, and that the taste for a 'Latin style' is to be attributed more to historico-social factors than directly to a study of the classics."

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

The Creighton University



Franz Wiesthaller, *Die "oratio obliqua" als künstlerisches Stilmittel in den Reden Ciceros* (Commentationes Aenipontanae XII). Innsbruck, Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1956. Pp. 115. 12 Austrian shillings.

In comparison with the *oratio obliqua* found in other Latin authors, that of Cicero has hitherto been neglected. Special monographs have been written on its use in Latin authors down to the time of Caesar, and as found in Livy, Tacitus, and Saint Ambrose in particular. But hitherto no such study has been made of the *oratio obliqua* in Cicero's orations. Even the larger grammars such as Kühner and Leumann-Hofmann give much more attention to the indirect discourse of Caesar, Tacitus, and Livy than they do to that of Cicero. Yet, as the author of this dissertation observes, a great stylist such as Cicero could not have failed to make use of indirect quotation to embellish his orations and make them even more persuasive: "Es liegt in seiner Hand, die Rede frei zu gestalten, sie umzumodeln, und zwar so lange, bis sie den rhetorischen Erfordernissen entspricht, bis sie sich in eine der rhetorischen Stilarten, in das genus tenue, das medium oder das temperatum, einreihen lässt" (p. 23). He then examines in detail the various uses which Cicero made of this device. The final chapter of the work is devoted to a syntactical study of *oratio obliqua*. Teachers of Latin composition will probably be surprised by the tables of words introducing direct and indirect discourse. Direct discourse in the speeches is introduced 40 times by *inquit*; 25 times without any verb; 20 times by *dicere*; 2 times by *defendere*, *loqui*, and *respondere*, respectively, and once each by *clamare*, *praedicare*, and *querere* (p. 81), which certainly gives more leeway in introducing quotations than is allowed in most books of composition.

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

The Creighton University

Christine Mohrmann, *Liturgical Latin: Its Origins and Character*. Washington, D. C., Catholic University of America Press, 1957. Pp. 95. \$2.50.

This interesting and valuable little book is the printed version of three lectures delivered in the spring of 1957 at the Catholic University of America.

In the first lecture, entitled "Sacred and Hieratic Languages," Miss Mohrmann points out that "language is not merely a sort of code to facilitate intercourse between human beings in daily life . . . but <it> is also the interpreter of all the motions and workings of the human mind, and, above

all, of human sensibility" (pp. 2-3). She further observes that whereas language "as a medium of communication" normally strives for a degree of efficiency which results in linguistic simplification, language "as expression" usually tends to become more rich and subtle. After establishing these principles, she shows how Greek epic poetry and Greek choral lyric were "artificial languages" (p. 11). Moreover, "whenever man comes into contact with the divine, his language shows a tendency to disassociate itself from ordinary colloquial speech" (p. 13). A similar "hieraticizing process" may be found in the use of "hieratic liturgical vestments." The Greek which was used in the early Christian church was strongly influenced by the language of the Septuagint, and "this language, to a Greek, sounded more or less exotic, colorful, and stylized" (p. 17). This effect was further heightened by the use in early Church literature of loan-words and expressions from Aramaic and Hebrew. The creation of a sacred and hieratic language was not accidental: "From the very earliest times Christians sought for prayer forms which were far removed, in their style and mode of expression, from the language of everyday life" (p. 28).

The second lecture, "Early Christian Latin and the Origins of Liturgical Latin," shows how "Christian Latin begins as a slowly developing linguistic variant which on the one hand, within the circle of the Christian groups, slowly breaks away from the general, spoken, profane Latin, and, on the other, gradually takes the place of the old Greek of the Christian communities" (p. 33). Christian writers of the third century made use of a newly developed Christian idiom while keeping "automatically to the traditional principles of style" (p. 47). "From the beginning of the fourth century onwards Christian writers start theorizing about the problem of a distinctive style" (p. 48). The Roman liturgy was eventually Latinized, because "the whole development of language and style and the changed attitude of the Christians towards the pagan culture helped to make it possible for a liturgical language to arise in the second half of the fourth century" (p. 52).

The third lecture, "General Characteristics of Liturgical Latin," stresses two important facts: "In the first place, Latin used in the liturgy displays a sacral style. . . . The advocates of the use of the vernacular in the Liturgy who maintain that even in Christian Antiquity the current speech of everyday life, 'the Latin of the common man,' was employed, are far off the mark. . . . In the second place, we must postulate that this stylization differs in different parts of the liturgy" (pp. 60-61). To prove these two points, she then proceeds to an analysis of the various portions of the Roman Mass.

In a work such as this, there are bound to be other interpretations for certain linguistic phenomena. The author, for example, notes that *crucior* was used by the early Christians for the blood of sacrificial animals and also for that of the Christian martyrs, but it was "never used of the Sacred Blood of Christ; this is always called *sanguis*" (p. 14). I doubt if this is to be explained by the fact that "in the stylization of the liturgical language, the traditional poetic word is felt to be 'profane,' or at least not suitable to be applied to Christ." *Crucior* is not necessarily "poetic," but it is more restricted in its connotation than *sanguis*. It refers only to blood flowing from a wound, where *sanguis* may refer to blood that is circulating in the veins or flowing from a wound. *Crucior* could only be referred properly to the Blood of Christ shed during His Passion and not yet reunited with His Body at the time of the Resurrection. Theologically, it would not have been appropriate to refer even to the Eucharistic species of wine as *crucior*; hence there were sound reasons for avoiding its use. The refusal of the early Christians to use the Latin *conservator* (perhaps simply *servator*—cf. Pliny NH 34.74—would be better) to denote Christ as Savior, is attributed to the fact that "Western Christianity was more fastidious about the Christian employment of words which had already done service in the pagan religions" (p. 44). Another explanation might simply be that *conservator* is not really an adequate translation of the Greek *σωτήρ*. Certainly the early Christians had no scruple in using the term in the sense of "preserver." The open book held by Christ in the fourth-century mosaic in the apse of Santa Pudenziana in Rome bears the legend: *Dominus Conservator Ecclesiae Pudenzianae*.

A few other statements in this excellent little book could perhaps be questioned, but they would not in the least lessen its significance, for what is here gathered together in three lectures is the fruit of more than thirty years of study and extensive publication on the part of one who is now recognized as the world's authority on early Christian Latin. This

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book might well be in every college library, and it certainly should be read by every one who is interested in the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, for it places the question at an intellectual level where it can rationally be discussed: "We must realize that sacral stylization forms an essential element of every official prayer language and that this sacral, hieratic character cannot, and should never, be relinquished. From the point of view of the general development of the Western languages—to say nothing of the problems raised by other languages—the present time is certainly not propitious for the abandonment of Latin" (p. 86). But further, "even if a solution could be found for this problem of the sacral languages of the liturgy, the question would still remain whether the gain would outweigh the loss. . . . For Christianity is not a timeless myth, but is founded on an historical fact, localized in time and history. Latin is thus a *vinculum unitatis*, not only horizontally but vertically, and Liturgical Latin is like a living element of the Church which makes possible the survival of this vertical link" (pp. 86-87).

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

The Creighton University

Paul MacKendrick, *The Roman Mind at Work* (Anvil Books No. 35). Princeton, New Jersey, Van Nostrand, 1958. Pp. 191; paper-bound. \$1.25.

The volume under review constitutes the companion volume to Walter R. Agard's *The Greek Mind* (Anvil Book No. 17) in the Van Nostrand Anvil Books series under the general editorship of Professor Louis L. Snyder of the City College of New York. It is but natural that there should be a Roman volume in this series, and that this should be done by a colleague of Professor Agard's, Professor Paul MacKendrick of the University of Wisconsin, a distinguished classicist in his own right, with a proneness for Rome.

Mr. MacKendrick's volume follows the same format as Mr. Agard's *The Greek Mind*: first, fourteen brief chapters on the Roman mind; then readings from original Greek and Latin sources to illustrate the points made in the chapters.

It is Paul MacKendrick's basic assumption that the Romans are doubly important insofar as they are relevant to us and important in themselves. MacKendrick would decry those who compare Greek with Roman culture and conclude that the Romans were less admirable than the Greeks.

Though the chronological outline is not always clear, the fourteen chapters in the book embrace "Romans on Their Origins" (753-509 B.C.), "The Class Struggle" (509-264), with "Manifest Destiny," "The Art of War," "Creative Borrowing," "The Roman Character," covering roughly the period 264-43 B.C. Four additional chapters focus on the late Republic, from 133 to 31 B.C. and they are "The Roman Character," "The Seamy Side," "Conservatism Revisited," and "Religion and Philosophy." The last period embraced is from 31 B.C. to 395 A.D. and includes chapters on "The Romans and the Land," "Roman Law," "The Road to Absolutism," "Rome and Christianity," and an "Epilogue: Rome and America."

The author, in his own words, "finds the Romans *utiles* and *dulces* for six reasons: they are vital, they are complicated, they illustrate the continuity of history, they demonstrate the virtues and vices of a didactic purpose in literature and art, they see a future in tradition, and they point the moral of *noblesse oblige*" (p. 11).

The purpose of this book, like that of *The Greek Mind*, is to make the ancients and their contribution to world civilization meaningful and vital within the reader's own cultural context. This is done admirably, both by the text (pp. 13-91) and the excerpts from original ancient sources (pp. 95-183), even though some of these sources appear in abridged form.

The fourteen chapters are easily adaptable for the fourteen class weeks in a college semester and no doubt could form the core for a one-semester course in Roman civilization, just as Walter R. Agard's *The Greek Mind* could do for a one-semester course in Greek civilization. Needless to say, both these books can do no more than just provide a basic core but are ideal for doing this, though ultimately more supplementary reading in original sources would be necessary for a more total view, not to mention the need for detailed class discussion.

As an introduction to Roman civilization, Paul MacKendrick's *The Roman Mind at Work* deals honestly, vigorously, challengingly, and meaningfully with its chosen field of inquiry. The general student, as well as the general reader, could profit from reading this book.

Colgate University

John E. Rexine

#### NOTE

1 Reviewed in CB 34 (March 1958) 59-60.

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